

NEW YORK POST (NY)

24 August 1985

Inside report

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CASEY VS. KGB

THE Reagan administration's revelation of potentially cancerous yellow powder used by the KGB to track Americans in Moscow helped blanket the U.S. decision to conduct an anti-satellite weapons test only because of Soviet delay in issuing a visa for a medical expert to go to Moscow and explain the frightening information to the U.S. Embassy.

Speculation in Washington has been that the U.S. cleverly delayed revealing the yellow powder incident.

In fact, the moment CIA Director William Casey established what the Soviets were doing he hurried to the White House to seek immediate U.S. remedial action.

He called a top-level White House meeting for Aug. 18 to review the medical evidence he had just received.

At his California ranch, President Reagan ordered nothing said until the U.S. Embassy could be fully briefed.

But when a visa was sought for the medical expert, the Soviet Embassy here denied it for 48 hours, with no explanation. That delayed the announcement until Aug. 21, the day after the anti-satellite test was announced.